

Statement from The Department of Energy

for

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

United States Senate

S. 3312 – The Responsible Disposal Reauthorization Act of 2016

September 22, 2016

The Department of Energy, Office of Legacy Management (DOE-LM) has no issues with the intent of the Responsible Disposal Reauthorization Act of 2016 to extend the operating life of the Grand Junction Disposal Site from the year 2023 to 2048. The disposal site is located about 18 miles southeast of the City of Grand Junction and was built as part of the Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978. The disposal site is the only active site available for receiving uranium mill tailings managed by DOE-LM. The Department works closely with local, state, and federal officials to ensure protection of public health, safety, and the environment by moving contaminated materials away from public places.

To date, the Grand Junction Disposal Site contains about 4.5 million cubic yards of low-level radioactive waste and receives approximately 2,700 cubic yards of waste per year. The disposal site has sufficient space to receive an additional estimated 235,000 cubic yards indicating the site could operate for 87 more years at current rates. New waste materials are derived from numerous locations – the City of Grand Junction continues to excavate waste tailings previously used in roads, sidewalks, and homes. DOE-LM operates groundwater treatment systems at several UMTRCA Title I and Title II sites that will periodically continue to generate residual materials

eligible for disposal in the Grand Junction Disposal Cell and that valuable capacity should continue to be utilized.